

## **50 - MICHIGAN VIRTUAL HIGH SCHOOL and DISTANCE LEARNING**

Virtual Learning is a non-traditional method of receiving pupil instruction for courses that are taken via the Internet, or otherwise on a computer. These courses may be offered at the district during the day as a scheduled class period with a certificated teacher available, at or through a community college or university as a part of dual enrollment; or, at home before or after school hours with an on-site teacher mentor for assistance and evaluation. The requirements for eligibility of the course to count toward pupil membership must meet the following criteria.

### **Requirements for Counting Membership:**

- 1. Computer or internet courses** provided during the school day as part of the pupil's class schedule, while the pupil is in attendance in the building, poses no problem for pupil accounting because the pupil is in regular daily attendance. A certificated teacher must be present in the classroom.

**Distance Learning** is provided via two-way communication between the teacher of record and a group of pupils over a television monitor, even though the teacher is physically remotely located from the pupils. The period of instruction is part of the pupils' class schedules during the regular school day. An adult must be present in the classroom. These opportunities are made available under cooperative arrangements among districts and pose no problem for pupil accounting. The certificated teacher must be an employee of a school district that is part of the cooperative agreement.

The following requirements must be met to count these pupils for membership purposes:

- ✓ The pupil must meet K-12 pupil membership eligibility requirements.  
(See section 3 – Pupil Membership Count Requirements)
- ✓ The course must be approved by the local school board and must generate credit toward the pupil's high school diploma or grade progression in order to count toward the pupil's membership.
- ✓ The certificated teacher and pupil must be assigned to the virtual course. The course must appear on the pupil's class schedule.

The course counts the same as any other in-school course and the seat time is counted accordingly. There is no limit to the number of virtual learning courses that can be counted toward membership for the pupil.

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2. The virtual learning course taken through a community college or university as **dual enrollment** poses no problem since seat time and the location of the class are not issues in counting dual enrollment classes toward a pupil's membership.
  - ✓ The pupil must meet K-12 pupil membership eligibility requirements.
  - ✓ The pupil must be concurrently enrolled and attending at least one course offered by the district in which credit is earned and regular attendance is required.
  - ✓ The eligible postsecondary institution has submitted to the eligible pupil a notice indicating the course or courses and hours of enrollment of eligible pupil and a list of eligible charges.
  - ✓ The school district must pay, to the eligible postsecondary institution on behalf of the eligible pupil, the lesser of the eligible charges or the prorated percentage of the state portion of the school district's foundation allowance paid on behalf of that particular eligible pupil.
  - ✓ 50% of the postsecondary course or career and technical preparation course must fall within the school district's academic year.
  - ✓ There is no limit to the number of virtual learning courses that can be counted toward membership as long as the pupil is concurrently enrolled in a "traditional" course in the school district. (See section 5G – Postsecondary Enrollment.)
3. The virtual learning course is being taken at a **pupil's self-scheduled time and place** with no "regular daily attendance" required of the pupil:
  - ✓ The pupil must meet K-12 pupil membership eligibility requirements.
  - ✓ The pupil must be concurrently enrolled and attending at least one course offered by the district in which credit is earned and regular daily attendance is required.
  - ✓ The pupil must be enrolled by and be in attendance on the appropriate count day (September or February) or during the 10/30-day rule period during the class time designated for the course on the pupil's class schedule.
  - ✓ This type of virtual learning course is **limited to two per semester** per pupil.

- ✓ The course must be **approved by the local district board** and must **generate credit** toward the pupil's grade progression in order to count toward the pupil membership.
- ✓ The **teacher-of-record** must be identified. The teacher-of-record may be the instructor associated with the virtual course and; therefore, may not necessarily hold a Michigan teacher certificate.
- ✓ An **on-site-mentor** must be assigned to the pupil who will be available for assistance and to monitor the pupil's progress in the virtual course. The on-site mentor must be a certificated teacher employed by the school district. The on-site mentor is responsible for reviewing any final exam or project that would indicate the pupil's success in the course.
- ✓ **Each course will count as one class** on the pupil's class schedule and will generate that portion of an FTE membership that a comparable course offered by the district would generate. This is identical to pupil accounting for dual enrollment.
- ✓ The district is required to pay any associated **tuition charges** for the course similar to the tuition requirement for dual enrollment as described in Section 21b of the State school Aid Act.

Note: The district may adopt additional requirements for pupils enrolled in such a class. Further, a district may choose not to offer these classes or to place greater restrictions on their pupils (e.g. high school pupils only), and/or on the courses offered; that is the local school board's prerogative.

4. A pupil who is a **homebound/hospitalized** pupil with a documented medical reason for not being in regular daily attendance at school and is enrolled in a virtual learning course, as described in 3 above, must be receiving a minimum of two 45-minute periods of instruction per week (general education pupil) or two one-hour non-consecutive periods of instruction per week (special education pupil) with a certificated teacher. This generates a full 1.0 FTE for the pupil. Any virtual learning classes would not generate additional membership since each pupil's membership may not exceed 1.0 FTE.
5. A pupil who is a "**mandatory expulsion**" pupil who has been required by state law to be expelled from public school and is enrolled in a virtual learning course, as described in 3 above:
  - ✓ The pupil may be receiving individualized instruction through a home-based program. The pupil must be receiving a minimum of two 45-minute periods of pupil instruction per week (general education) or two one-hour nonconsecutive periods of

pupil instruction per week (special education) with a certificated teacher. This generates a full 1.0 FTE for the pupil. Any virtual learning classes would not generate additional membership.

- ✓ The pupil may be receiving instruction through an alternative education program setting in which several pupils are enrolled and receiving instruction at the same time. The pupil's membership would be pro-rated and the virtual learning classes could be counted toward that pupil's membership.

### **Regulatory References:**

State Aid Act  
388.1698(5)

### **Limitation of counting virtual learning classes**

#### **Q #1**

Part 3 limits a pupil to two virtual learning classes and states that the pupil must be enrolled and attending the district for at least one class concurrently. What does concurrently mean?

#### **A #1**

Part 3 is discussing those pupils who take the virtual learning classes at home or at the public library, away from the school. The pupil takes the class after school, before school, or on weekends. The pupil is doing this independently from all other classes. The district must have a certified teacher involved and the local school board must recognize the course in order to count it toward the pupil's minimum required hours. Such a pupil must be enrolled and in regular daily attendance in at least one class during the semester that the pupil is doing the independent study and the district is counting that independent study toward that pupil's FTE.

#### **Q #2**

If the pupil is taking three virtual learning classes, how many traditional classes must the pupil be enrolled in?

#### **A #2**

If the pupil is taking these virtual learning courses away from school on the pupils own time, the district is limited to counting two of those courses toward the pupil's FTE count. Also, the pupil must be enrolled in at least one traditional course at the school. If the pupil is taking these virtual courses as dual enrollment, the pupil is required to enroll in one traditional course at the public school.

### **Charging the pupil on-line fees**

Q #3

A nonresident pupil is short credits for graduation and would like to graduate with his class. The pupil is taking a full class load during the day at his resident district. The resident district is counting the pupil for 1.0 FTE. The nonresident pupil is enrolled in our adult education program for an on-line course through the Michigan Virtual High School in the evening to earn additional credit. May our district charge the pupil the fee for the on-line course?

A #3

Yes. The pupil is enrolled and taking a full course load during the normal school day; thus, the pupil cannot generate any more state aid. The nonresident pupil may be charged tuition and necessary fees.

Q #4

The pupil takes an on-line course through Michigan Virtual High School during the regular school day. The pupil also would like to receive college credit under dual enrollment for this course. There is an additional \$25 fee to take the exam for college credit. May the district assess this fee on the pupil? Or, may the district deny the pupil of taking the exam at the district's expense?

A #4

No. If this is an eleventh or twelfth grade resident pupil, the district cannot deny dual enrollment. This \$25 fee falls under the "tuition and fees" that the district is responsible for under dual enrollment requirements.

### **Independent Studies**

Q #5

What are the guidelines the district must follow for pupils wanting to take an independent study course?

A #5

The guidelines for independent studies are identical to the requirements for the virtual learning courses.